

a little girl being boarded at a hospital for 21 days while they searched up and down the East Coast to find a bed where she could stay.

At 14 years old, she has now spent half of her life in residential care. But it was how her mother ended that story that has stuck with me. She looked me in the eyes and told me that: "Compared to other people I know, we have been lucky."

Mr. Speaker, that is not luck. This is a mental health system so broken that it is hard to recognize.

And how have our Republican colleagues followed up in response? They have offered a piece of legislation that is one of the largest assaults on our mental health system in recent history.

The GOP repeal bill will remove guaranteed behavioral health coverage for everyone covered under the Medicaid expansion. It will abandon those suffering from substance abuse disorder to fend for themselves in a country ravaged by opioid abuse. It will allow work requirements for care, forcing countless people to somehow choose between getting treatment and keeping their job. It will help insurers further skirt parity laws that require them to treat the mentally ill fairly. It will send out-of-pocket costs soaring for the most vulnerable among us.

Mr. Speaker, one in five Americans today suffer from mental illness. These brave men and women and their families that love them deserve more than the cheap luck of a broken system. They deserve more than the empty rhetoric of a bill that "might" cover or "could" cover the care that they need. They deserve an ironclad commitment from their government that we will have their back. This bill does not do that.

DON'T REPEAL AFFORDABLE CARE ACT—MAKE BIG FIXES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, the healthcare plan supported by President Trump and Speaker RYAN will raise premiums and deductibles.

Let's tell the truth here on the floor of the House of Representatives. It will raise premiums and deductibles. It will throw millions off of their insurance. It will shift the cost of health care to the States who are fiscally strapped today, causing a rationing of care at the State level. And, yes, it will cover less and less people and raise the insecurity that people have today about whether or not, if they get an illness or someone in their family does, they are going to have healthcare coverage.

The result is that working people, older Americans, will pay more; and, in fact, with older Americans, it will impose an age tax. The irony of this is that working people and older Americans are going to be paying for the tax

breaks in this bill, tax breaks to millionaires and to billionaires. I will explain.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office recently estimated that 14 million Americans will lose coverage in 2018; 24 million Americans will lose their insurance coverage by 2026. In my State of Connecticut, 220,300 individuals are projected to lose their health insurance by 2026.

Again, older Americans will be hit the hardest. They will see their premiums spike. Yes, it is an age tax. And the reckless cuts in this bill rob, in addition to this, it robs the Medicare trust fund, which people rely on, of over \$170 billion, shortening the life of that trust fund by years. Long-term care that older Americans rely on will be hurt, as well as folks who are disabled. And children will be hurt as well.

Over the next 10 years—and again, these are not my numbers, but the Joint Committee on Taxation estimates that two of the tax breaks in the repeal bill will provide \$275 billion in tax cuts to individuals who have an income over \$200,000, and nearly \$190 billion will go to tax cuts for health insurance companies.

Do we believe that they are hurting?

It is also going to provide a tax break for drug companies, for pharmaceutical companies.

Are they hurting today? No. They are reaping profits every single day. That is the case with medical device manufacturers as well.

While the wealthiest Americans and corporations reap the benefits of this Trump bill and Ryan bill, roughly 160 million households with incomes below that \$200,000 level will pay for the repeal of these taxes.

I have heard from thousands of my constituents about how the Affordable Care Act has positively impacted their lives. I have submitted testimony for the record from women in my district who depend on the Affordable Care Act to manage life-threatening illnesses, get back to work, get them the mental health services that they need.

Just think of that injustice when you think about Mnikesa Whitaker, whom I spoke to just 2 weeks ago. She has an autoimmune disease which is called scleroderma. I regret to say that this has put her life in danger, but she now has the protection because she is no longer threatened by preexisting conditions. In her words, she said: "I will die without the Affordable Care Act."

We have a moral obligation not to let Mnikesa or others down. We have an obligation to older Americans and to the middle class of this country, to working people. The Affordable Care Act needs to be changed in critical ways. Premiums and deductibles are way too high and are putting too much strain on families who barely make enough to live on. We know that because their wages have not kept pace with rising costs. There is not enough competition in the marketplaces.

But instead of repealing the Affordable Care Act, we should be working our hearts out to make the big fixes that are necessary. But my friends, that starts with defeating this wrong-headed bill.

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LET'S COME TOGETHER TO MAKE MEANINGFUL PROGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LAWSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAWSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the Republican plan to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act is an exercise in smoke and mirrors.

This proposal would give tax breaks to wealthy Americans by burdening hardworking families with higher healthcare costs.

The Republican plan allows for soaring new healthcare costs for our seniors and shortens the life of the Medicare trust fund, endangering seniors and disabled Americans who depend on Medicare coverage.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that if the Republican proposal became the law of the land, some 14 million people will be without healthcare insurance in 2018, and up to 24 million could lose their healthcare coverage by the year 2026. The CBO also found that average premiums for people buying insurance on their own would be 15 to 20 percent higher in 2018 and 2019 than they would under current law.

In my home district, the uninsured rate has gone from 18.7 percent to 14.9 percent since the Affordable Care Act was implemented, and 34,000 people have purchased coverage thanks to the ACA. Those people are now at risk of losing their healthcare coverage if the Republican plan becomes law. This is completely unacceptable to Floridians.

We know that the Affordable Care Act is not a perfect law, and there is a lot of room for improvement. That is what we should focus on in Congress right now: coming together to figure out ways to bring down healthcare costs, stabilize the market, and help ensure that more people can have access to the affordable health care they need and deserve.

We need to put aside the partisan bickering, roll up our sleeves, and get to work. It is a sad day in America when Members of Congress are unable to come together to do what is right for the American people. I will continue to fight to ensure that Floridians with preexisting conditions don't have to worry about losing their healthcare costs, and that young adults can stay on their family's insurance until they reach age 26.

I urge my colleagues to remember that no roads or bridges were ever built by Democrats or Republicans. No war was ever won by Democrats or Republicans. From Social Security to Medicare, to putting a man on the Moon